

WHAT IS CLAIMED

1. A method for training users to operate a set of devices, wherein at least one client computer is connected to a device controller via a network and wherein a particular user uses the client computer to communicate with the device controller via the network to perform a training exercise using the set of one or more devices, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving control information at a proxy in the device controller reflecting at least one instruction from the client computer regarding a task to be performed as part of the training exercise;

performing an operation associated with at least one of the devices of the set of devices;
and

providing a result of the operation to the client computer.

2. A system for training users to operate a set of one or more devices, comprising:

a device controller connected to at least one client computer via a network, wherein the device controller includes a proxy that receives control information from the client computer reflecting at least one task to be performed as part of a training exercise and transfers the control information to any device as part of the training exercise; and

a set devices that receives the control information transferred from the proxy in the device controller, performs an operation associated with the control information, and provides a result of the operation to the client computer via the device controller.

3. A method for training users to operate a set of devices, wherein at least one client computer is connected to a device controller via a network and wherein a particular user uses the client computer to communicate with the device controller via the network to perform a training exercise using the set of devices, the method comprising the steps of:

 a server controller transferring overhead information using a generic set of commands to the device controller in order to perform overhead functions relating to the set of devices;

 the device controller using the overhead information to exercise control over at least one of the devices in the set of devices for the purposes of performing overhead functions relating to the device;

 receiving control information at the device controller reflecting at least one instruction from the client computer regarding a task to be performed as part of the training exercise;

 performing an operation associated with at least one of the devices of the set of devices;
and

 providing a result of the operation to the client computer.

4. A system for training users to operate devices, comprising:

 a set of devices;

 a server/controller including a processor that transfers overhead information for overhead functions relating to the set of devices using a generic set of commands;

 a device controller connected to at least one client computer via a network and connected to the server/controller, wherein the device controller includes a processor configured to receive

the overhead information from the server/controller, exercise control over the set of devices using the overhead information, receive from the client computer control information reflecting at least one task associated with a training exercise, and transfer the control information to the set devices in order to perform an operation associated with at least one device of the set.

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